functioning. Further, the Government has initiated consultations on a policy on Competition issues.

<c) Yes, Sir.

Declaration of dividends below level of earning per share

*200. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken note of the general tendency on the part of companies including those in which Government have substantial interest, to declare dividends much below the level of earning per share, which effects the shareholders' interests;

(b) whether Government propose to make suitable changes in the company law to address this problem; and

(c) if so, by when that is likely to be done?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA): (a) Under the Companies Act, 1956 there is no requirement of mandatory declaration of dividend at any given level.

(b) There is no such proposal.

(c) Does not arise.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Air connectivity to regional stations

1355. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to have regional stations also connected by the air routes;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether one or more cities in Bihar will also come under this scheme; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Government has laid down Route Dispersal Guidelines with a view to achieve better regulation of air transport services taking into account the need for air transport services of different regions of the country including North-East region. The air routes have been categorized into three categories. 12 routes connecting metro-stations directly and having maximum air traffic are categorized as Category-I routes. Routes connecting stations in North East region, Jammu & Kashmir, Andaman & Nicobar and Lakshadweep are categorized as Category-I I. Routes other than those in Category-I and Category-ll are categorized as Category-Ill.

Any airline which operates scheduled air transport service on one or more of the routes under Category-I, shall be required to provide such service in Categories-ll and III as indicated below:—

The operator will deploy on routes in Category-ll at least 10% of the capacity he deploys on routes in Category-I and of the capacity thus required to be deployed on Category-ll routes, at least 10% would be deployed on services or segments thereof operated exclusively within the North-Eastern region, Jammu & Kashmir, Andaman & Nicobar and Lakshadwaep.

The operator will deploy routes in Category-Ill, at least 50% of the capacity deployed on routes in Category-I.

(c) and (d) It is however up to the airlines to provide air services to specific places depending on traffic demand and commercial viability. As such, the airlines are free to operate anywhere in the country, subject to compliance of the route dispersal guidelines.

Audit of Airports Authority of India

1356. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the regular aerodrome audits of Airports Authority of India certifying preparedness levels are done by International Civil Aviation Organisation;

(b) if so, the details of last three years; and